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BE TOUGH, BE CUNNING





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BE TOUGH. BE CUNNING

BRITISH COMMANDOS, AMERICAN RANGERS... BOTH COME OF A TOUGH BREED WHICH DOES NOT KNOW THE MEANING OF DEFEAT.



Chapter 1. *Master Commando*

ON 27 DECEMBER 1940, THE COMMANDOS RAIDED VAAGSO IN GERMAN-OCCUPIED NORWAY. FOR THE NEWLY-FORMED STRIKING FORCE, IT WAS AN ACID TEST...

CORRECT YOUR ELEVATION AND WINDAGE, MEN...

OH, LIEUTENANT... KEEP AN EYE ON THE SERGEANT WHILE WE'RE ASHORE, WILL YOU?



THIS WAS SERGEANT NAUGHTON'S FOURTH COMMANDO OPERATION...

COME ON, MEN!

BUT, CAPTAIN, NAUGHTON'S AN OLD HAND AT THIS GAME...

THAT'S THE POINT. WE WANT A GOOD MAN FOR A SPECIAL MISSION AFTER THIS SHOW... I WANT TO BE SURE HE'S THAT MAN.



THE TOWN WAS TAKING A POUNDING FROM NAVAL GUNS AS 'Y' TROOP SLIPPED QUIETLY OFF THE BEACH. . .



NO ORDER WAS GIVEN. NO ORDER WAS NEEDED BY SERGEANT NAUGHTON.



THERE WERE GERMANS IN THE HOUSE AHEAD, USING A SPANDAU FROM THE STREET WINDOWS. 'Y' TROOP INFILTRATED THE HOUSE FROM THE BACK. . .



Be Tough, Be Cunning

SERGEANT NAUGHTON KICKED THE DOOR OFF ITS HINGES AND DOSED THE INTERIOR WITH THE TOMMY GUN . . .



AN HOUR LATER, 'Y' TROOP WAS PINNED DOWN IN A TIMBER YARD BY A GERMAN IN A HOUSE OPPOSITE. HE WAS USING A SPANDAU. THE TROOP RUSHED HIM...



Be Tough, Be Cunning

THEY CAME BACK TO COVER. SERGEANT NAUGHTON USED HIS TONGUE ON THEM, THEN LUNGED FORWARD ALONE . . .



SERGEANT NAUGHTON WENT DOWN UNDER THE FIRST BURST OF THE SPANDAUI. HE HIT THE GROUND WITH HIS LEGS SPLAYED, HIS BODY CROOKED. HE LOOKED GOOD AND DEAD . . .



Be Tough, Be Cunning

SERGEANT NAUGHTON WAS MOVING. SLOWLY, AN INCH AT A TIME, AND ALWAYS NEARER THE HOUSE . . .



THE GERMAN HAD HIS EYES ON THE TIMBER PILE AND THE MEN HIDDEN THERE. THERE WERE A DOZEN CORPSES IN THE YARD . . .



IT TOOK SERGEANT NAUGHTON TEN MINUTES TO REACH THE GROUND FLOOR WINDOW OF THE HOUSE. IT TOOK HIM TEN SECONDS TO DEAL WITH THE GERMAN.



'Y' TROOP MOVED OUT FROM COVER, NOISY WITH RELIEF. THE LIEUTENANT SAID NOTHING, BUT HE GRINNED. . .

THE CRAFTY OLD SO-AND-SO DID IT!

WHAT DID I TELL YOU...

I WAS WRONG... HE'S CUNNING ALL RIGHT!



AROUND NOON, THE LIEUTENANT AND SERGEANT NAUGHTON WERE RIFLING AN OFFICE FOR DOCUMENTS WHEN THE GERMANS COUNTER-ATTACKED...

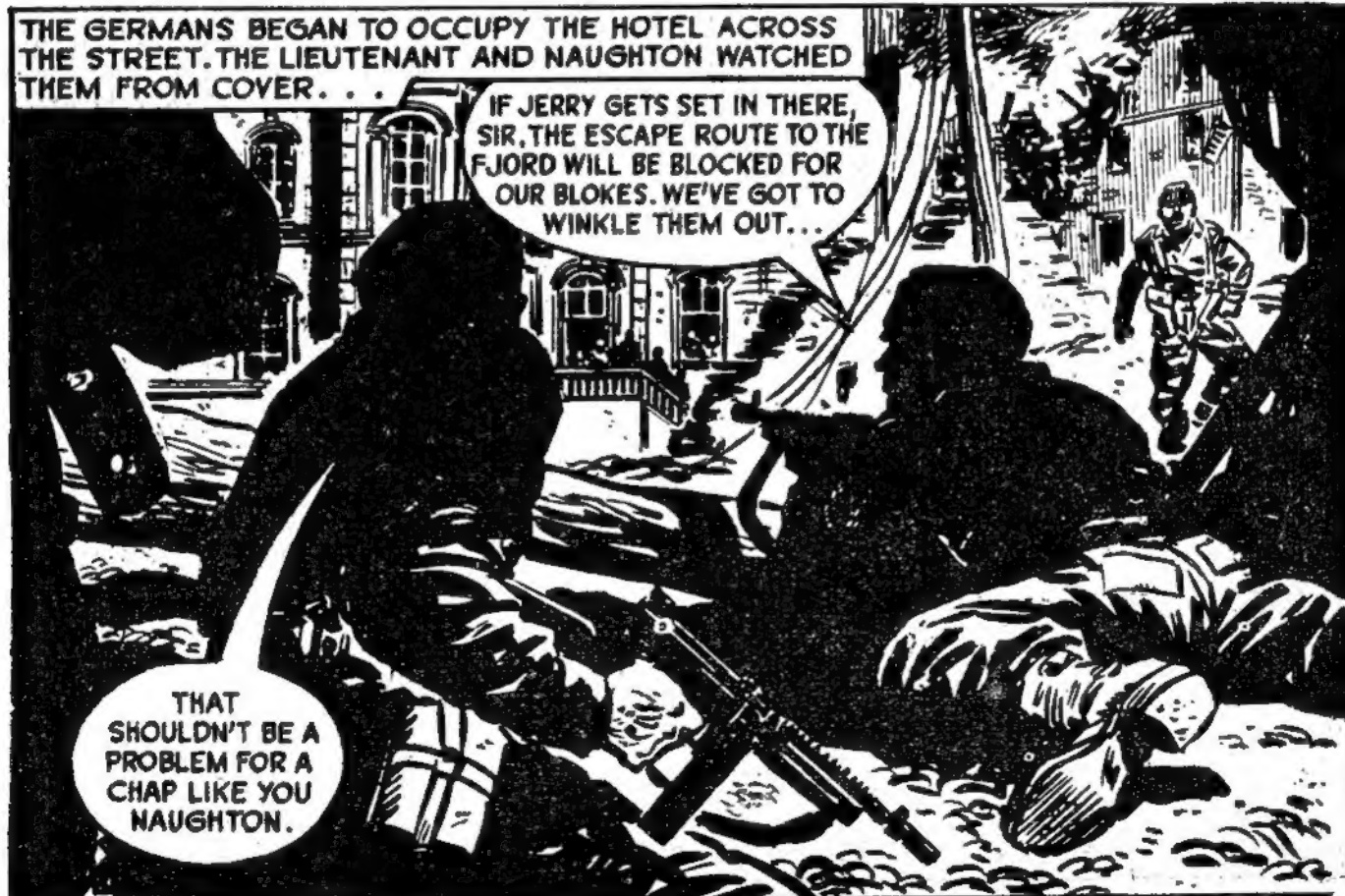


Be Tough, Be Cunning

A FEW MINUTES LATER, SERGEANT NAUGHTON JOINED THE LIEUTENANT IN THE STREET. THEY WERE ONE HUNDRED YARDS FROM THE BUILDING WHEN THE EXPLOSION BLEW THE WALL INTO THE STREET AND THE FIRE STARTED. . .



THE GERMANS BEGAN TO OCCUPY THE HOTEL ACROSS THE STREET. THE LIEUTENANT AND NAUGHTON WATCHED THEM FROM COVER. . .



THERE WAS SHARP IRONY IN THE LIEUTENANT'S VOICE, IN HIS GRIN. SERGEANT NAUGHTON JUST LOOKED BACK AT HIM, AS HE JOINED THE REST OF THE TROOP.

NO, SIR...I'M HERE TO DO A JOB, NOT TO BE A HERO! WE'LL NEED A FULL TROOP FOR THIS JOB.

HEY, LIEUTENANT... WE'RE BACKING OUT IN TWENTY MINUTES.

WHILE 'Y' TROOP WITH SERGEANT NAUGHTON FLUSHED OUT THE HOTEL, THE LIEUTENANT REPORTED TO THE CAPTAIN . . .

WELL, I'VE KEPT AN EYE ON NAUGHTON. THAT MAN IS THE COMPLETE COMMANDO... TOUGH ... CUNNING ... COOL ... A TEAM-WORKER. IT'S AN EDUCATION JUST TO WATCH HIM.

THANKS, LIEUTENANT. THAT'S ALL I WANTED TO KNOW...

Be Tough, Be Cunning

TWO HOURS LATER, ON THE DECK OF THE DESTROYER SLIDING UP THE FJORD AWAY FROM BURNING VAAGSO, THE CAPTAIN HAD A WORD WITH SERGEANT NAUGHTON . . .

NO, I MEANT IT, SERGEANT. YOU PUT UP A GOOD SHOW. SO GOOD IN FACT, THAT WE'VE GOT A SPECIAL MISSION LINED UP FOR YOU. I'LL TELL YOU ABOUT IT WHEN WE GET BACK . . .

WELL . . . THANKS, CAPTAIN.

A WEEK AFTER THE VAAGSO RAID, AT THE COMMANDO BASE IN NORFOLK . . .

NOW, SERGEANT, HOW CAN I PUT THIS TO YOU?

IS IT ABOUT THAT SPECIAL MISSION, SIR? WHERE IS IT TO BE? AS LONG AS I'LL BE CLOBBERING JERRY . . .

THE CAPTAIN'S SMILE WAS HARD, AND THOUGHTFUL . . .

WELL NO, SERGEANT . . . YOU WON'T BE CLOBBERING ANYONE. BUT IT'S A VITAL MISSION, ALL THE SAME. WE'RE SENDING YOU TO AMERICA TO TEACH THE YANKS HOW TO FIGHT . . . COMMANDO FASHION.

Chapter 2. *Green as Grass*

FROM THE MOMENT HE REACHED NEW YORK IN LATE APRIL 'FORTY-ONE, SERGEANT NAUGHTON DETESTED AMERICA...

HUH!
THE YANKS CAN
TALK ABOUT FIGHTING
WHEN THEY CHANGE
THAT TORCH FOR
A GUN.



THERE WAS A U.S. ARMY JEEP WAITING FOR HIM. THE CORPORAL WHO DROVE IT WAS TALKATIVE.

YESSIR, SERGEANT, THESE
RANGERS ARE TOUGH. THEY'LL
CHEW ROCKS AND SPIT OUT
THE SOFT CENTRES! THOSE
NIPS WON'T KNOW WHAT
HIT THEM!

OH I THINK THEY
WILL, CORPORAL...
WORDS!

126
RANGERS
BATTALION
TRAINING



Be Tough, Be Cunning

THE AMERICAN RANGER BATTALIONS HAD BEEN FORMED ON THE LINES OF THE BRITISH COMMANDOS.

WELL, THIS IS YOUR COMPANY, SERGEANT... PICKED MEN. THEY NEED POLISHING, OF COURSE, THAT'S WHY YOU'RE HERE. THEY'RE ONE HUNDRED PER CENT FIT, THAT'S FOR SURE...

I CAN SEE THAT, COLONEL. THEY'LL HAVE NICE HARD MUSCLES FOR THE JAPS TO BLUNT THEIR BAYONETS ON.



HEY, TENNESSEE, YOU HEAR THAT LIMEY CRACK ABOUT US TO THE COLONEL?

I DID, TOO!

SILENCE THERE! NOW LISTEN TO ME. TOMORROW WE GO TO FLORIDA FOR OPERATIONAL TRAINING...



THE FIRST DAY HE TOOK THEM ON AN EXERCISE, NAUGHTON SAW JUST HOW GREEN THESE TOUGH-MUSCLED AMERICANS WERE.



QUIETLY... JUST
MOVE WITH THE CURRENT
YOU'RE USING THOSE
PADDLES LIKE
LOUD-HAILERS...

HEY,
SARGE! THIS
GRENADE...THE PIN'S
KINDA DROPPED
OUT!

NAUGHTON BELLOVED AT THE MAN WITH THE PRIMED GRENADE, BUT HE MUST HAVE LOST HIS HEAD. THE EXPLOSION SUCKED THE BOAT OUT OF THE SWAMP WATER.



CHUCK IT
CLEAR, MAN.
GET RID
OF IT!

AAAGH!

Be Tough, Be Cunning

THEY WERE IN THE EVERGLADES. THE WATER WAS THICK, SLIMY, FULL OF STRANGLING WEEDS. THEY HAD TO GET THE THREE MEN OUT QUICKLY, BUT THE REST OF THEM PANICKED . . .



THERE WERE LONG LANAI CREEPERS HANGING FROM THE TREES. SERGEANT NAUGHTON USED THEM COOLLY. HE HAD DONE THE SAME THING BEFORE, AND UNDER FIRE, AT NAMSOS.



NAUGHTON HAD JUDGED THE ARC OF HIS SWING COOLLY. HE GRABBED SUTLER'S OUTSTRETCHED ARM AND HELD IT. ONE BOAT HAD CUT FREE FROM THE TANGLE IN THE WATERWAY.



IT WAS THE EX-LAWYER FROM PHILADELPHIA, KEITH RACE, WHO WAS HANDLING THE BOAT. HE DID THE JOB NEATLY, TOO.



THEY NEVER FOUND THE THIRD MAN, DURNECKER. NO-ONE TALKED AFTERWARDS EXCEPT SERGEANT NAUGHTON...



Be Tough, Be Cunning

THE AMERICANS WERE QUIET FOR A WHILE AFTER THAT BUT THEY HAD RECOVERED BY THE TIME THEY TRIED LANDINGS ON THE FLORIDA KEYS.



THE BIG MAN'S NAME WAS BORRAMEE. HE WAS A KANSAN. HE HAD A LOT OF SELF-CONFIDENCE AND A GOOD BURST OF SPEED OVER FIFTY YARDS.



SERGEANT NAUGHTON WATCHED THE KANSAN BORING AHEAD. HE GRINNED COLDLY.

RIGHT...WE'VE HIT THE BEACH AND WE FIND INTELLIGENCE WAS WRONG! THE JAPS AREN'T DUG IN ON THE HIGH ROCKS, THEY'RE ON OUR RIGHT FRONT. WE SWITCH THE ATTACK...



BORROMEE REACHED THE HIGH ROCKS ON HIS OWN. HE WHEELED, BEAMING. THE SERGEANT'S VOICE WAS LIKE A FIST IN HIS FACE. . .

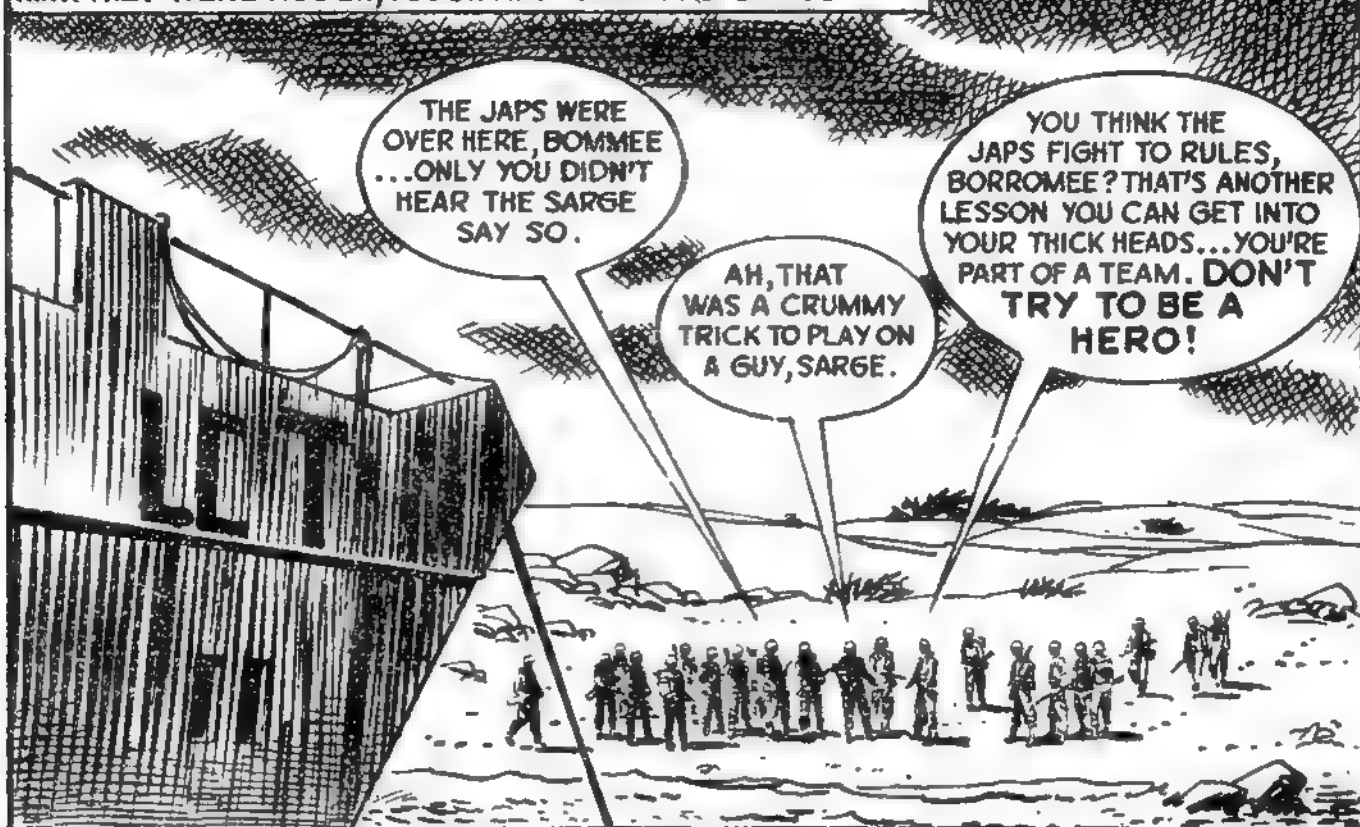
WHAT THE HECK...?

NICE WORK, BORROMEE. YOU'RE A HERO. YOU'LL GET A MEDAL...AND THEY'LL PIN IT ON THE STARS AND STRIPES ON YOUR COFFIN.



Be Tough, Be Canning

SERGEANT NAUGHTON LOOKED COLDLY AT THE MEN AROUND HIM. THEY WERE ROUGH, TOUGH AND GREEN AS GRASS. . .



SERGEANT NAUGHTON DOUBTED WHETHER THESE RANGERS WOULD EVER LEARN. ON THE TRIP TO DENVER, COLORADO, AT THE END OF AUGUST, THEY WERE STILL TALKING BIG. . .



Be Tough, Be Cunning

7

THE DENVER SCHEDULE INCLUDED ROCK CLIMBING AND BATTLE FATIGUE TRAINING. SERGEANT NAUGHTON DROVE THE RANGERS HARD. . .

ALL RIGHT, MEN . . .
THIS IS WHERE YOU GET
OFF. MAKE YOUR OWN WAY
BACK TO BASE . . . AND
REPORT THERE IN
TWENTY-FOUR HOURS.



EACH MAN HAD HALF A K-RATION, A WATER BOTTLE AND HIS OWN RESOURCES OF WILL - POWER AND INTELLIGENCE .

BUT, SARGE . . . IT'S ALL
OF SIXTY MILES TO
BASE. ARE YOU TRYING
TO KILL US?

I'M TRYING TO MAKE
RANGERS OF YOU,
SUTLER . . . IT MAY KILL
YOU AT THAT!

HEAR THAT,
FELLERS? WELL
NO-ONE KILLS ME
THAT EASY.



Be Tough, Be Cunning

IN THE COLARADO DESERT, THE SUN DRAWS THE JUICE OUT OF A MAN AND BOILS HIM IN IT.



THERE WAS A ROAD TWO MILES AWAY ACROSS THE DESERT. ONLY ONE MAN IN THE COMPANY TURNED HIS BACK ON THE BLOOD AND TOIL, THE TEARS AND SWEAT. . .



HE CAME FROM TENNESSEE, A TALL LANKY HILLMAN NAMED CANDLESS WITH A SNIPER'S EYE AND AN INDEPENDENT MIND. . .



THE COMPANY WAS SWEATING IT OUT OVER THE FIRST DEADLY FIVE MILES. NONE OF THEM HAD ANY INTEREST TO SPARE FOR THE DUST CLOUD BOWLING ALONG THE ROAD.

SAY THIS IS TOUGH, BOMMEE!

YEAH, AND SO ARE WE SUTLER, REMEMBER?

KEEP GOING... WE'VE GOT TO KEEP GOING!



THE REST OF NAUGHTON'S COMPANY SLOGGED IT THE HARD WAY. IT WAS SHEER GRIT THAT KEPT THEM GOING.

TWENTY MILES TO GO, FELLERS... AND FOUR HOURS TO DO IT. WE'LL MAKE IT!

WE'VE GOTTA MAKE IT!



Be Tough, Be Cunning

THE COMPANY GOT TO BASE WITH HALF-AN-HOUR TO SPARE. CANDLESS GOT THERE TOO. BUT HE WAS IN BETTER SHAPE THAN THE OTHERS. . .



SERGEANT NAUGHTON LISTENED TO THEIR REPORTS, COLD-EYED. . .



SERGEANT NAUGHTON GRINNED AT THE TENNESSEAN. THE GRIN WAS CROOKED. . .



DESPITE HIS HARSH WORDS, NAUGHTON WAS BEGINNING TO BE IMPRESSED BY THE DETERMINATION OF THESE YANKS.



NAUGHTON TOOK THEM UP INTO THE HIGH PEAKS OF THE CONTINENTAL DIVIDE. HE SHOWED THEM HOW TO USE GRAPPLING HOOKS FIRED BY ROCKET CHARGES.

CHECK THAT ANCHORAGE.
SUTLER. GET ON UP, KINNEY!
MOVE, MAN, MOVE!



YOUNG KINNEY HAD BEEN STRANGELY SLUGGISH THAT DAY . . . AND AT NOON, HE FELL .

SARGE!
KINNEY'S
FALLEN!

AHH . . .
AHH . . .

GOOD
GRIEF!



KINNEY FELL SIXTY FEET ON TO AN UNCLIMBABLE ROCK SPUR. THAT WAS WHEN SERGEANT NAUGHTON REALISED THAT THESE YANKS WERE MORE TO HIM THAN JUST LOUD-MOUTHED TRAINEES...



SUDDENLY SERGEANT NAUGHTON KNEW THAT HE NEED NOT HAVE BEEN AFRAID FOR THESE MEN...



Be Tough, Be Cunning



BUT KINNEY WAS DEAD. NAUGHTON'S VOICE WAS HARSH. . .

BUT HOW THE BLAZES DID IT HAPPEN? WHY DID HE FALL?

I GUESS HE GOT DIZZY, SARGE. . . THAT DESERT SLOG THE OTHER DAY KNOCKED HIM UP MORE THAN THE REST OF US. HE WAS JUST A KID, SEE?



THAT WAS WHEN SERGEANT NAUGHTON KNEW THAT HE HAD RESPECT FOR THESE AMERICAN RANGERS, AS WELL AS AFFECTION.

BUT WHY DIDN'T HE TELL ME HE WAS SICK?

YOU'RE A TOUGH GUY, SARGE. BUT I GUESS KINNEY WOULD RATHER BREAK HIS NECK THAN ADMIT YOU COULD LICK HIM. THAT GOES FOR THE REST OF US, TOO!



THREE MONTHS LATER, THE COMPANY WAS DRAFTED FROM COLORADO TO THE PACIFIC SEABOARD. THEIR TRAINING WAS OVER.

YOU DESPISED THESE MEN WHEN YOU FIRST MET THEM IN COLUMBUS, DIDN'T YOU, SERGEANT? HAVE YOU CHANGED YOUR MIND?

THEY'VE CHANGED IT FOR ME, COLONEL. I'VE LEARNED SOMETHING FROM THEM... BIG WORDS, FOR A YANK, ARE WHAT A STIFF UPPER LIP IS FOR US LIMEYS... A BOOST INTO ACTION!



THE RESPECT AND AFFECTION SERGEANT NAUGHTON FELT FOR HIS MEN WAS RETURNED BY THEM. THERE WAS ONLY ONE MAN HE STILL DISLIKED AND THAT WAS BIG BORROMEE. AND BORROMEE DISLIKED THE SERGEANT. . .

HEY, FELLERS, THE SARGE IS IN THERE WITH COLONEL HINES.

YEAH? ANYONE HE FLUKES WILL BE LEFT BEHIND WHEN WE HIT THE JAPS.



THAT'S ME THEN! NAUGHTON HATES ME LIKE POISON. I'LL BE FIGHTING COCKROACHES IN THE COOKHOUSE BY THE TIME HE GETS THROUGH WITH ME.

BUT SERGEANT NAUGHTON WAS TOO EFFICIENT A SOLDIER TO LET HIS FEELINGS INTERFERE WITH HIS JUDGMENT.

NOW, SERGEANT...REMEMBER, THESE MEN HAVE GOT TO TAKE ON THE DEADLIEST KILLERS IN THE WORLD. ARE THERE ANY, IN YOUR VIEW, WHO WON'T MAKE THE GRADE?

NO, COLONEL...THEY'LL DO, THE LOT OF THEM...



SERGEANT NAUGHTON'S VOICE WAS QUIET, INCISIVE...

GOOD. WE NEED ONE OFFICER, ONE SERGEANT, FROM AMONG THESE MEN. ANY SUGGESTIONS?

YES, COLONEL, FOR LIEUTENANT...KEITH RACE PICKS HIMSELF. FOR SERGEANT, A MAN WITH A BIG MOUTH AND A BIGGER HEART...
PRIVATE BORROMEE.

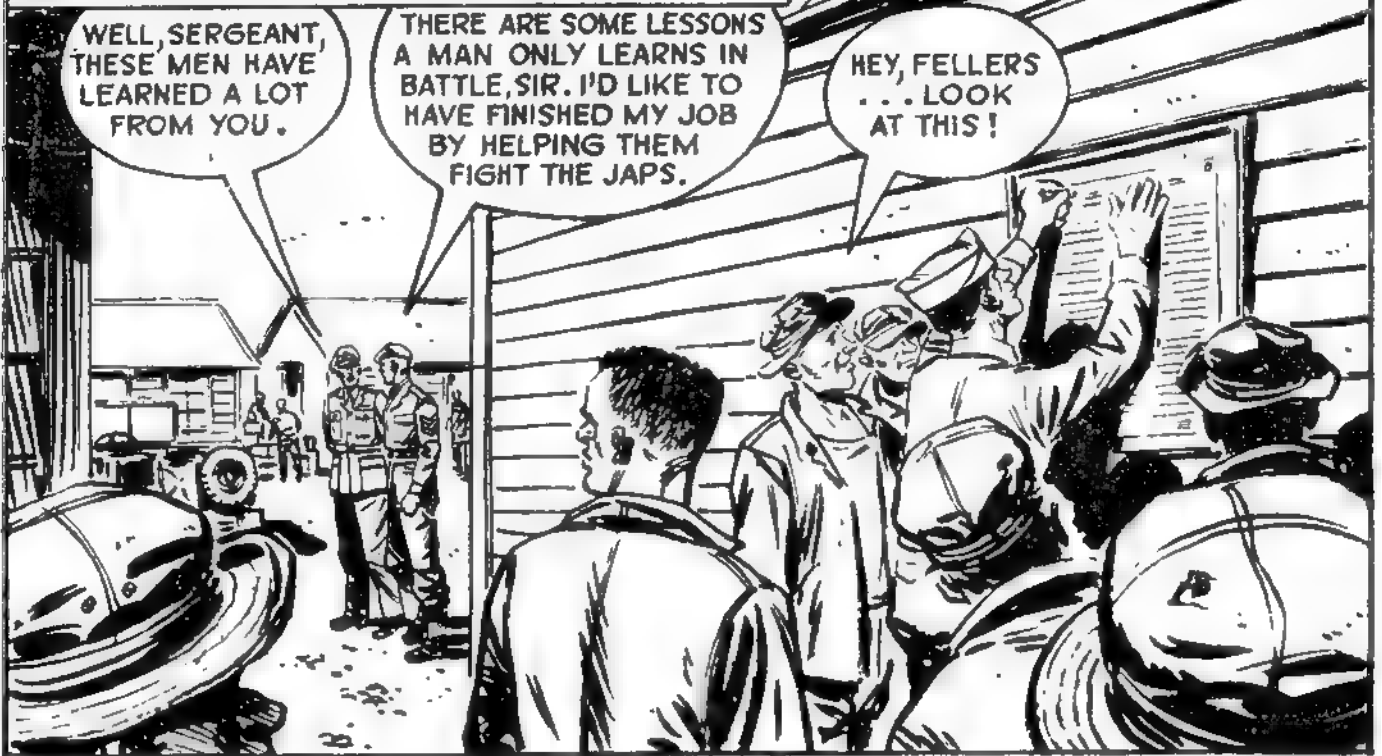


THE RANGER BATTALION WAS IN A TRANSIT CAMP NEAR SEATTLE. THAT WAS AS CLOSE TO THE PACIFIC WAR AS SERGEANT NAUGHTON WOULD GET . . .

WELL, SERGEANT, THESE MEN HAVE LEARNED A LOT FROM YOU.

THERE ARE SOME LESSONS A MAN ONLY LEARNS IN BATTLE, SIR. I'D LIKE TO HAVE FINISHED MY JOB BY HELPING THEM FIGHT THE JAPS.

HEY, FELLERS . . . LOOK AT THIS!



SERGEANT NAUGHTON WAS PACKING A GRIP IN HIS HUT WHEN BORROMEE CAME IN . . .

SARGE . . . I CAME TO . . . WELL, THANK YOU. HECK! I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY . . .

THAT MAKES A CHANGE FOR YOU, DOESN'T IT . . . SARGE?



Be Tough, Be Cunning

THEY TURNED AND FACED EACH OTHER THEN. THEY GRINNED.

I WISH YOU WERE COMING WITH US WHEN WE HIT THAT TROOPSHIP AT FRISCO NEXT WEEK, SARGE...

I WISH I WAS COMING WITH YOU TOO, BORROMEE... BUT THE ARMY RECKONS I'VE FINISHED MY JOB!



THE REST OF THE MEN WERE WAITING FOR NAUGHTON OUTSIDE THE HUT. BIG BORROMEE SUDDENLY BROKE THROUGH THEIR FRIENDLY FAREWELLS WHEN THE SERGEANT CAME OUT...

SO LONG, SARGE... AND THANKS!

HEY, SARGE, LOOK... YOU'LL BE TAKING YOUR FURLOUGH IN FRISCO. IF THE BOYS COULD SMUGGLE A UNIFORM TO YOU AND YOU COULD BE ON THAT GANGPLANK NEXT WEEK... WELL I GUESS LIEUTENANT RACE AND I COULD KINDA MESS UP THE COUNT IF YOU SEE WHAT I MEAN...

I SEE WHAT YOU MEAN, SERGEANT BORROMEE. BY GOLLY, YOU'LL MAKE A RANGER YET...



A WEEK LATER, 126 RANGERS BATTALION EMBARKED ON THE TROOPSHIP *APACHE NATION* AT SAN FRANCISCO, BOUND FOR PEARL HARBOUR...AND LIEUTENANT RACE AND SERGEANT BORROMEE MESSED UP THE COUNT...

HAVE YOU CHECKED THE COMPANY TALLY, SERGEANT BORROMEE?

YESSIR, LIEUTENANT...ALL PRESENT AND CORRECT!

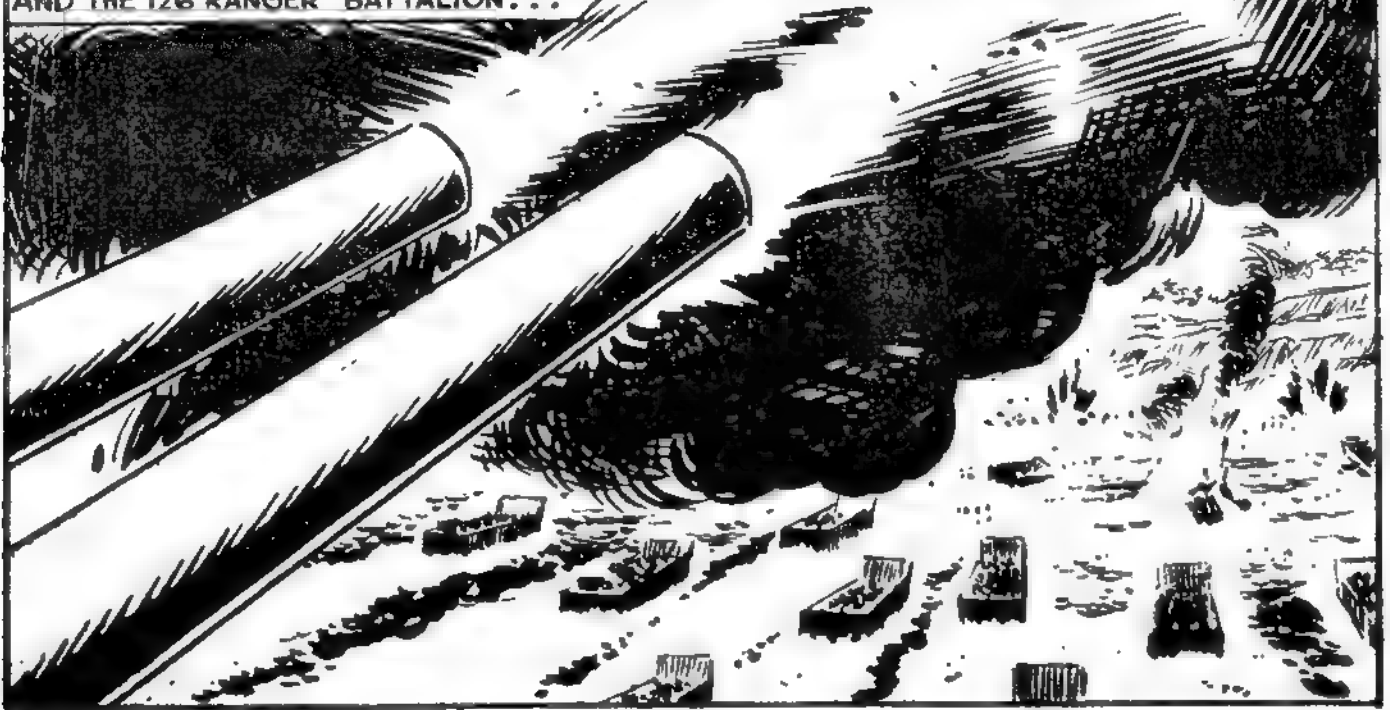


AS HE WENT UP THE GANGPLANK INTO THE TROOPSHIP, SERGEANT NAUGHTON OF THE BRITISH COMMANDOS WAS INDISTINGUISHABLE FROM THE AMERICAN RANGERS HE HAD TRAINED...



Chapter 3. *The Grim Game*

THE AMERICANS ATTACKED THE JAPANESE-HELD ISLAND OF GUAK IN THE EASTERN SOLOMONS IN EARLY 1942. THEY SENT IN ONE DIVISION OF MARINES AND THE 126 RANGER BATTALION...



EASY COMPANY BLUNDERED OFF THE RAMP INTO FOUR FEET OF BLOOD-STAINED SURF. IT WAS THEIR SAVAGE INTRODUCTION TO BATTLE...



NAUGHTON MOVED WITH THEM. HE WAS NOT SUPPOSED TO BE HERE AND HE HAD NO RANK, BUT HE HAD A GUN . . .

SPREAD OUT, MEN! WORK UP BEHIND THEM WITH TWO SECTIONS, SERGEANT.

OKAY, FELLERS, YOU HEARD...BACK ME!



THEY GUTTED THE STRONGPOINT WITH T.N.T. AND FLUSHED IT OUT WITH TOMMY GUNS. THEY DID IT QUICKLY. NAUGHTON WAS PLEASED WITH THEM.

HOW ARE WE DOING, SARGE?

FAIR ENOUGH, SUTLER!



Be Tough, Be Cunning

BUT THERE ARE LESSONS A MAN CAN ONLY LEARN IN BATTLE. LIEUTENANT RACE WAS LEADING ON THE NARROW PATH WHEN THE WOUNDED JAP OFFICER THREW HIMSELF ON HIS KNEES . . .



RACE HAD CHECKED. AS HE LOWERED HIS GUN THE JAP TWISTED AROUND AND FIRED. NAUGHTON WAS ALREADY MOVING . . .



NAUGHTON KNOCKED RACE ASIDE ONE-HANDED AND HIT THE JAP WITH A BURST FROM HIS TOMMY GUN.



THE JAP'S BULLET HAD MISSED RACE, BUT IT HAD HIT ONE OF THE MEN BEHIND HIM. THE MAN WAS FALLING FORWARD AS RACE TURNED.

STEVE
BOY...

WHAT HAVE
I DONE?

IT'S OKAY,
LIEUTENANT...BUT
LIKE THE SARGE
SAID...DON'T GIVE
THE NEXT ONE HALF
A CHANCE...



NAUGHTON WATCHED RACE, WAITED FOR THE LIEUTENANT TO GIVE THE RIGHT ORDER. HE GAVE IT CURTLY. BATTLE TEACHES A MAN TO BE RUTHLESS. . .

WE'VE GOT JAPS TO KILL. LEAVE STEVE FOR THE STRETCHER BEARERS AND GET MOVING.

WITH YOU,
LIEUTENANT.

YEAH...
YEAH,
LIEUTENANT!



ABOVE THE BEACH ON GUAK THERE WERE LIMESTONE TERRACES BANKED UP TO WHERE THE JUNGLE BEGAN. THERE WERE JAPS SCUTTLEING THERE.



LIEUTENANT RACE CHECKED HIS MEN THREE HUNDRED YARDS FROM THE HANGING WALL OF THE HIGH JUNGLE, WHILE HE RADIOED THE C.P. FOR ORDERS.



TWENTY SECONDS LATER, THE JAPS HIDING IN THE EDGE OF THE JUNGLE HEARD A QUEER SOUND FROM THE ROCK TERRACE. ONE OF THEM RAISED HIS HEAD CURIOUSLY.



CANDLESS HAD MADE THAT SOUND IN THE GREEN HILLS OF TENNESSEE. IT HAD ALWAYS BROUGHT THE GAME TO THE GUN. THE JAP DIED CURIOUS...



BY THE TIME LIEUTENANT RACE GOT HIS ORDERS FROM THE C.P., TENNESSEE WAS GETTING HIS SNIPER'S EYE IN. . .



Be Tough, Be Cunning

WHEN THE SUN WENT DOWN ON THE ROCKS AND THE JUNGLE, NAUGHTON FELT THE NERVES OF THE RANGERS TIGHTEN. THEIR FIRST NIGHT IN BATTLE WAS AHEAD OF THEM . . .



NAUGHTON WATCHED EASY COMPANY HOLD THEMSELVES ON A TIGHT REIN ALL THAT NIGHT, NOT FIRING, NOT MOVING, BUT THE LESSONS HAVE TO BE LEARNED . . .



IT WAS CANDLESS WHO SAW THAT DIM FIGURE IN THE WHITE MIST BEFORE DAWN, AND FIRED THAT HOT-BLOODED SHOT. THE GUN-FLASH WAS WHAT THE JAPS HAD BEEN ANGLING FOR...



NAUGHTON HAD USED THE FIFTEEN SECOND WARNING HIS EXPERIENCE GAVE HIM. HE HAD GOT MOST OF EASY COMPANY TO THEIR FEET WHEN THE DELUGE OF GRENADES LOBBED INTO THEIR POSITIONS...



Be Tough, Be Cunning

CANDLESS WOULD NEVER DRAW ANOTHER POSSUM TO HIS GUN IN THE GREEN HILLS OF TENNESSEE. A GRENADE HAD MAULED HIS RIGHT ARM AT THE SHOULDER. . .



AT NOON ON THE FOURTH DAY, THE JAP OUTPOSTS PULLED BACK INTO THE STEEP JUNGLE. EASY COMPANY FOLLOWED UP.



THERE WAS A DEAD MARINE HUNCHED ON HIS FACE ON A NARROW SIDE PATH. BIG BORROMEE'S FACE PUCKERED. HE MOVED OVER ROUGHLY. . .



EASY COMPANY WERE LEARNING THEIR LESSONS THE HARD WAY, THE WAY LESSONS MUST BE LEARNED IN WAR. THE CORPSE HAD BEEN BOOBY-TRAPPED BY THE JAPS. . .

AAAGH!



THERE WERE EIGHT JAPS WATCHING THAT TRAP. THEY CAME OUT FAST, GRINNING AT THE THREE BODIES ON THE PATH UNDER THE CLOUD OF CORDITE. . .

THE OTHER KETOS ARE AHEAD...ON THE MAIN TRACK! WE MAKE SURE OF THESE FIRST!



Be Tough, Be Cunning

SERGEANT BORROMEE WAS BIG ENOUGH TO LEARN FROM HIS MISTAKES, AND HE LEARNED FAST. HE WAS BIG ENOUGH TO BEAR PAIN, TOO . . .



THE REST OF EASY COMPANY HAD SKIRMISHED ALONG THE MAIN TRACK. IT WAS NAUGHTON WHO MISSED BORROMEE AND SLIPPED BACK ALONE AND SAW THREE BODIES AND THE GRINNING JAPS . . .



BORROMEE GAVE THE JAPS NO CHANCE. HE CUT THEM DOWN WITH ONE LONG, RUTHLESS BURST, SWINGING ACROSS THEIR BACKS FROM TEN YARDS . . .



NAUGHTON GRINNED AT THE BIG KANSAN AS HE JOINED HIM ON THE MAIN TRACK. THERE WAS RESPECT IN THE GRIN . . .



FOR TWO SWEATING WEEKS, EASY COMPANY WORKED UPWARDS THROUGH THE THICK JUNGLE. THE JAPS GAVE GROUND, FALLING BACK ON THEIR MAIN DEFENCES, BUT THEY LEFT SNIPERS BEHIND THEM.



Be Tough, Be Cunning

THE MAIN JAP DEFENCES ON GUAK WERE LOCATED IN THE CAVES WHICH HONEYCOMBED THE ROCKY CORE OF THE ISLAND. A TOUGH STRONGPOINT GUARDED THE MAIN ENTRANCE TO THE CAVES . . .



BY DUSK, EASY COMPANY HAD WORKED AROUND TO A SPUR OF THE JUNGLE ABOVE AND BEHIND THE JAPANESE STRONGPOINT. RACE OUTLINED THE SITUATION TO HIS MEN . . .



SUTLER HAD FOUGHT WELL ALL THAT FIFTH DAY. THE TALL TEXAN HAD A LOT OF COURAGE. HE ALSO HAD A LOT OF PRIDE . . .

AT THE SAME MOMENT THAT THE MAIN ATTACK GOES IN, WE'RE GOING TO TAKE THE JAPS FROM THE REAR. IF WE PLAY IT RIGHT, WE'LL HAVE THAT STRONGPOINT BUTTONED UP WITH MINIMUM CASUALTIES.

I RECKON THERE'S A MEDAL IN THIS FOR YOU, SUTLER BOY. . .



AT DAWN THE NEXT MORNING, THE CP ISSUED A CANCELLATION. RACE PASSED THE ORDER TO THE MEN. TO ALL THE MEN, THAT IS, EXCEPT SUTLER. . .

RELAX MEN. . . THE ATTACK'S BEEN POSTPONED. REST EASY, STAY HIDDEN AND KEEP QUIET!



SUTLER WAS ON HIS OWN A THOUSAND YARDS TO THE LEFT OF EASY COMPANY. . . ABOVE THE JAP STRONGPOINT.

ZERO MINUS ONE. . . THIS IS WHERE YOU GO IN AND TAKE THAT STRONGPOINT ON YOUR OWN, SUTLER BOY.



Be Tough, Be Cunning

AT 0- EIGHT-HUNDRED HOURS, ONE AMERICAN CHARGED FORWARD WITH HIGH AND MISGUIDED COURAGE.



EASY COMPANY SAW HIM FROM ITS HIDDEN POSITION.



THE JAPS IN THE STRONGPOINT WHEELED AROUND TO FACE THE SURPRISE ATTACK FROM THE REAR. IT WAS A SUPRISE FROM WHICH THEY RECOVERED QUICKLY, GRINNING. . .



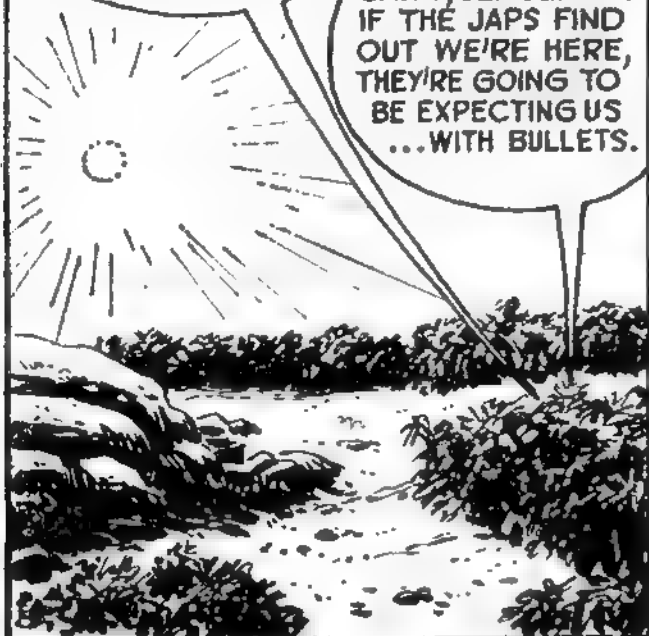
SUTLER CAME DOWN THE SLOPE, GUN BLAZING, THE REBEL YELL ON HIS LIPS. PERHAPS, AT THE LAST MOMENT, HE REALISED SOMETHING WAS WRONG. IT WAS TOO LATE THEN. . .



THE MEN OF EASY COMPANY LAY HIDDEN IN THE SPUR OF JUNGLE ALL THAT ENDLESS HOT DAY. THEY HEARD SUTLER'S CRIES...

AW HECK, LIEUTENANT... THEY'RE TORTURING SUTLER! CAN'T WE DO SOMETHING?

YOU KNOW WE CAN'T, SERGEANT! IF THE JAPS FIND OUT WE'RE HERE, THEY'RE GOING TO BE EXPECTING US... WITH BULLETS.



WHEN THE CRIES STOPPED THERE WAS ONLY THE SILENCE AND THE HEAT... UNTIL DUSK AND THE ZERO HOUR FOR ATTACK.

FORWARD, EASY!

TAKE THEM, MEN!



BUT THERE WAS NO SURPRISE. THE JAPS HAD A MACHINE GUN LAID DEAD ON THE SLOPE. THE FIRE WAS MURDEROUS...

SEE... THE KETO COME!

WE ARE READY FOR THEM, THANKS TO THE FOOLISH ONE!



EASY COMPANY WADED FORWARD AGAINST THE BULLETS. THERE WAS NO COVER, AND NONE OF THE LESSONS THEY HAD LEARNED COULD HELP THEM.



THEY HAD A LOT OF GUTS, THE YANKS. LESS THAN HALF THE COMPANY REACHED THE JAP STRONGPOINT, BUT THE SURVIVORS WENT IN VENGEFULLY.



Be Tough, Be Cunning

THAT NIGHT, THE RANGERS CAMPED WITH THE MARINES AROUND THE ENTRANCE TO THE CAVES. THE JAPS HAD GONE TO EARTH LIKE RATS.



NAUGHTON HAD COME ALL THE WAY FROM COLUMBUS, OHIO TO GUAK WITH THE GREEN YANKS HE HAD TAUGHT. THAT DAY IN THE CAVES, HE SAW THAT HIS JOB WAS FINISHED.



AT ZERO HOUR, THEY MOVED INTO THE CAVES SHOULDER TO SHOULDER. EACH OF THESE RANGERS WAS A TOUGH AND INDEPENDENT SOLDIER. TOGETHER THEY WERE A TEAM...



THE JAPS RETREATED DEEP INTO THE DARK TUNNELS UNDER THE ROCK. THEY FOUGHT LIKE RATS, FIERCELY, WICKEDLY...



BUT THE RANGERS HAD LEARNED THEIR LESSONS WELL. THEY WERE RUTHLESS...



Be Tough, Be Cunning

THE BURSTING GRENADES FLUNG THE JAPS ACROSS THE TUNNEL AND EXPOSED THE HIDDEN MACHINE GUN. EASY COMPANY FINISHED THE JOB WITH HOT LEAD...



EASY COMPANY MOVED ON FLUSHING THE JAPS FROM THEIR HOLES AS THEY WENT. THERE WERE CLOSE ON THIRTY JAPS IN THE SCREAMING, FRENZIED MOB WHICH BURST FROM THE CAVE THREE MINUTES LATER. THEY WERE NOT AFRAID OF DEATH...



THERE WERE SIX RANGERS WITH SERGEANT BORRAMEE IN THE PATH OF THAT VICIOUS BANZAI ATTACK. THEY STOOD THEIR GROUND...



SHEER NUMBERS CARRIED THE LAST JAPS TO THE VERY MUZZLE OF SERGEANT BORRAMEE'S GUN. THEY GOT NO FARTHER. NAUGHTON AND LIEUTENANT RACE WERE THERE TO SEE THE END. . .



BELOW GROUND, THE MARINES WERE CLEARING UP THE LAST POCKETS OF RESISTANCE ON GUAK. IN THE FAILING LIGHT, THE RANGERS GATHERED AROUND THE CAPTURED JAPANESE FLAG. THAT WAS WHERE COLONEL HINES FOUND THEM. . .

HERE, SERGEANT NAUGHTON. . . I GUESS THIS TROPHY BELONGS TO YOU. WE JUST HAD TO FIGHT THE JAPS, BUT YOU HAD TO FIGHT US AS WELL BACK IN THE STATES.

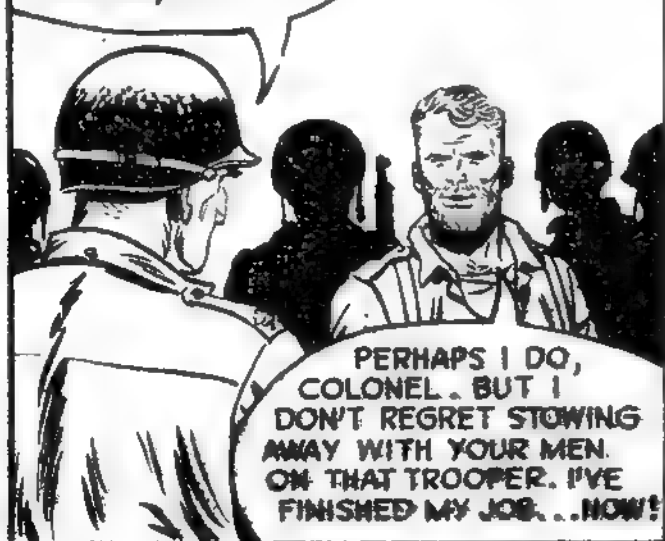
YOU SAID IT, LIEUT. . . AND I RECKON THIS LIMEY WON BOTH TIMES.

WHAT THE BLAZES!



NAUGHTON SWUNG AROUND TO FACE THE COLONEL OF ONE TWO SIX. HE HAD THE CAPTURED FLAG IN HIS HANDS AND A SMILE ON HIS TOUGH FACE.

THE DEVIL, NAUGHTON! DO YOU REALISE WHAT THIS MEANS? YOU'RE ABSENT WITHOUT LEAVE. YOU FACE A SERIOUS CHARGE, MAN. . .



PERHAPS I DO, COLONEL. BUT I DON'T REGRET STOWING AWAY WITH YOUR MEN. ON THAT TROOPER, I'VE FINISHED MY JOB. . . NOW!

THE COLONEL LOOKED AROUND HIM AT THE TOUGH, HARD FACES OF THE RANGERS. HE GRINNED. . .

WELL. . . I GUESS THERE ARE EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES AT THAT. THESE MEN ARE GOING TO MISS YOU, THOUGH.



NO, COLONEL, THEY WON'T. NOT NOW. THAT'S WHAT I MEANT WHEN I SAID I'D FINISHED MY JOB.

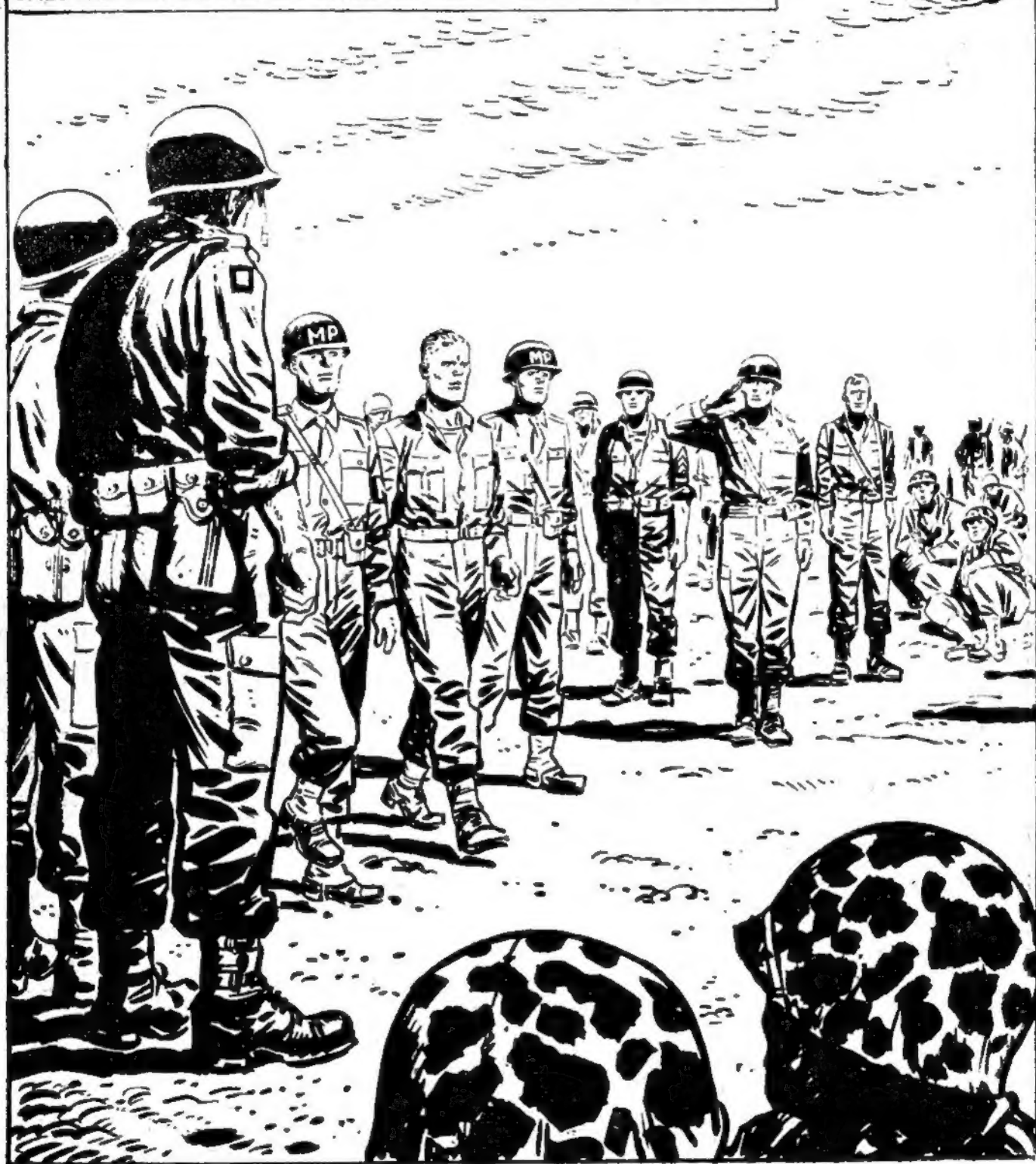
TWO DAYS LATER, UNDER ARMED GUARD, SERGEANT NAUGHTON OF THE BRITISH COMMANDOS WAS MARCHED TO THE JETTY ON GUAK BEACH FOR TRANSPORT TO SAN FRANCISCO VIA PEARL HARBOUR.



THE AMERICAN FORCES WERE BUSY CLEANING UP THE ISLAND. THEY WERE ALL VETERANS IN THAT GROUP OF MARINES AND RANGERS ON THE BEACH AHEAD. THAT WAS THE WAY THEY LOOKED TO SERGEANT NAUGHTON AS HE APPROACHED THEM.



SERGEANT NAUGHTON WAS RIGHT. THEY WERE VETERANS WHO SALUTED HIM ON THE CAPTURED BEACH AT GUAK THAT DAY . . .



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5/8/63

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★ No. 114 **ZONE OF CONFLICT**

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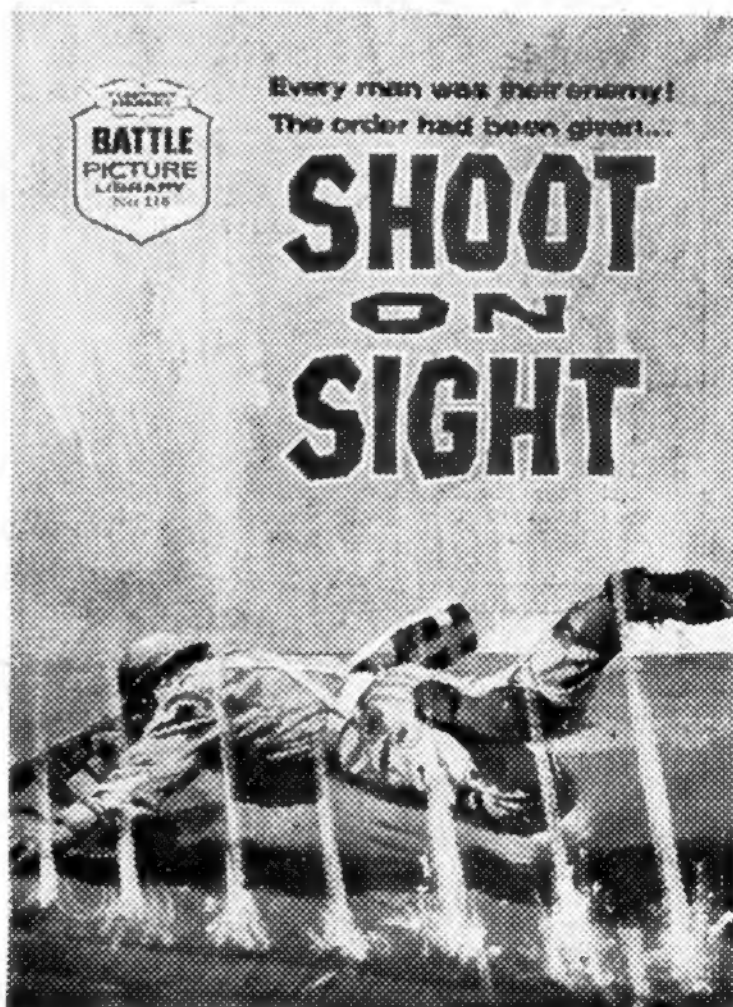
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